

REMARKS

Applicants have amended their claims in order to further clarify the definition of various aspects of the present invention. Specifically, Applicants have amended claim 9 to delete dependency thereof on claim 8, and have further amended claim 9 to recite the "filter" unit (rather than the "filtration" unit).

The objection to the drawings as failing to comply with 37 CFR § 1.84(p)(4), the Examiner contending that the reference character "21" has been used to designate both a supply tank and a pH conditioner supply tank, set forth in Item 2 on page 3 of the Office Action mailed February 23, 2004, is respectfully traversed. Thus, note that Figs. 1, 3 and 4 show tanks "21" and "22". Moreover, as set forth in paragraph [38] on page 10 of the Substitute Specification submitted with the Preliminary Amendment filed May 7, 2001 (hereinafter Substitute Specification), the structure includes a supply tank 21 and a pH conditioner supply tank 22. Note also Figs. 3-5, also showing tanks 21 and 22.

Considering the Substitute Specification and the present drawings, it is respectfully submitted that this Substitute Specification and the drawings are consistent in using reference character 21 for the supply tank and reference character 22 for a pH conditioner supply tank; and that, in particular, the drawings use separate reference characters 21 and 22 respectively to designate the supply tank and the pH conditioner supply tank. In view thereof, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the drawings as set forth in Item 2 on page 3 of the Office Action mailed February 23, 2004, is respectfully requested.

The requirement by the Examiner for a proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings, in reply to the Office Action mailed February 23, 2004, is noted. Since the objection to the drawings and a requirement for a proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are respectfully traversed, it is respectfully submitted that Applicants need not submit a proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings, in order to avoid abandonment of the above-identified application; that is, it is respectfully submitted that the present traverse of the objection to the drawings constitutes a complete response to the requirements for a proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings.

The objection to the disclosure as set forth in Item 3 on page 3 of the Office Action mailed February 23, 2004, the Examiner contending that page 14, line 21 should describe a pH condition supply tank 22 rather than a pH conditioner supply tank 21, is noted. However, the Examiner's attention is respectfully directed to paragraph [0038] of the Substitute Specification, which has revised the original specification to describe a supply tank 21 and a pH conditioner supply tank 22. In view of the Substitute Specification, it is respectfully submitted that the required correction has already been made.

The objection to claim 9 as being in improper form, set forth in Item 4 on page 4 of the Office Action mailed February 23, 2004, is noted. Claim 9 has been amended to be dependent only on any one of claims 5-7 (that is, dependency of claim 9 on claim 8 has been deleted). In view of this amendment of claim 9, it is respectfully submitted that the objection to claim 9 under 37 CFR § 1.75(c), set forth in Item 4 on page 4 of the Office Action mailed February 23, 2004, is moot.

As an aside, the contention by the Examiner in Item 4 on page 4 of the Office Action mailed February 23, 2004, that claim 9 has not been further treated on the merits is not understood. Note that claim 9 has been rejected under the second paragraph of 35 USC §112, in Item 6 on page 4 of the Office Action mailed February 23, 2004. It is respectfully submitted that this rejection of claim 9 under the second paragraph of 35 USC §112 is inconsistent with the statement by the Examiner that claim 9 has not been further treated on the merits, in the aforementioned Item 4.

Rejection of claim 9 under the second paragraph of 35 USC §112, set forth in Item 6 on page 4 of the Office Action mailed February 23, 2004, is noted. By the present amendments, claim 9 has been amended to recite said "filter" unit. This is consistent with recitation of "a filter unit" in each of parent claims 5, 6 and 7. In view of present amendments to claim 9, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claim 9 under the second paragraph of 35 USC §112, in Item 6 on page 4 of the Office Action mailed February 23, 2004, is moot.

The Examiner is thanked for the indicated allowance of claims 5-7, as set forth in Item 7 on pages 4 and 5 of the Office Action mailed February 23, 2004. Since claim 9 is dependent on any one of these allowed claims 5-7, it is respectfully submitted that claim 9 should now also be allowed.

The response to Applicants' traverse of the restriction requirement set forth in the Office Action mailed July 30, 2003, set forth in Item 1 on page 2 of the Office Action mailed February 23, 2004, is noted. Withdrawn claims are being maintained in the above-identified application, subject to further proceedings in connection therewith. It must be pointed out, however, that it is difficult to see any difference between the "filter

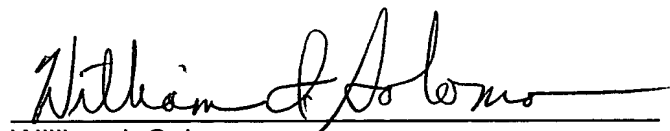
unit" and "ultra filtration unit", as alleged by the Examiner in lines 4-2 from the bottom on page 2 of the Office Action mailed February 23, 2004.

In any event, in view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of at least all claims being considered on the merits in the above-identified application are respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR § 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to the Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (Case No. 503.39144X00), and please credit any excess fees to such Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "William I. Solomon", is written over a horizontal line.

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